THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Based on the requests received from various quarters, the Government has revised excise duty on petrol several times. The details of changes in excise duty on petrol since April, 2002 are given in the Statement.

Statement

Excise duty on petrol since 1st April, 2002

Product	As on 1/4/02	As on 4/6/02	As on 1/3/03	As on 16/6/04	As on 9/7/04	As on 19/08/04	As on 1/3/05	As on 1/3/06	As on 1/3/07
Petrol -									
Advalorem Specific	32.00%, Rs. 7/ Ltr.	30.00% Rs. 7/ Ltr.	30.00% Rs. 7.50/ Ltr.	26.00% Rs. 7.50/ Ltr.	26.00% Rs 7.50/ Ltr.	23.00% Rs 7.50/ Ltr.	8.00% Rs. 13/ Ltr.	8.00% Rs. 13/ Ltr.	6.00%, Rs. 13/ Ltr.

Alternate arrangement for Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline Project

1016. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the US Energy Secretary has opposed the Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline in view of the recent sanction imposed on Iran;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are planning any alternate arrangement for this project;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) how much expenditure has been incurred so far on the Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Government is pursuing import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project.

(e) GAIL (India) Ltd. (GAIL) & Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL), the PSUs involved with the project, have spent approximately Rs.3.50 crores on the technical & financial consultants appointed for the project.

Auction of oil and gas blocks in 7th round of NELP

1017. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government has delayed the auction of oil and gas blocks under the seventh round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) by when the auction will be made;

(d) whether there is a huge backlog of drilling work from previous auctions; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) There is no time schedule fixed for launch of seventh round of New Exploration licensing Policy (NELP-VII). The necessary preparatory work before launch of NELP.VII *viz.* finalization of Notice Inviting Offer(NIO), Bid Evaluation Criteria (BEC) and Model Production Sharing Contract (MPSC) are in progress. The inter-ministerial consultations for obtaining clearance before launch of NELP-VII have not yet been completed.

(d) and (e) In offshore and deepwater areas, there is a delay in drilling commitments due to offshore drilling rig scarcity worldwide.

As far as commitment of drilling in NELP is concerned, in first three rounds of NELP, 76 wells have been drilled up to March 2007 against the commitment of 96 wells. Blocks awarded in further rounds of biddings *i.e.* NELP-IV, NELP-V and NELP-VI are presently under phase-I which is mainly seismic data acquisition stage.

Transfer of customers from one LPG distributor to other

1018. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of Government in transferring customers from one distributor to another (L.P. Gas Agencies) in the name of restructuring;

(b) the details of such transfers in the Ahmedabd Territory by IOC during 2006;

(c) whether he has received any representation protesting such transfers; and

(d) if so, the actions taken on such representations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Government had reviewed the policy on transfer of LPG customers in November, 2004 and conveyed to the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to stop inter-company transfers of customers as it was found that the practice of transferring customers from the established LPG distributorships to newly commissioned distributors had led to a general sense of complacency among the new distributors. The new policy aims at encouraging all distributorships to explore new and less covered areas to expand their market share as almost all the urban markets are at their saturation level.

However, restructuring of distributorship by transfer of customers from one distributorship to another intra company is carried out periodically to improve upon the customer service and to optimize logistics in order to avoid cross delivery in various areas as per extant policy guidelines of the OMCs.

(b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has advised for inter-distributorship transfer of 15,000 customers in Ahmedabad market during 2006-07, out of which 11,638 customers have already been transferred to the respective distributors.